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AN

ORATION

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE WASHINGTON BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

OF

MASSACHUSETTS

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ON THE

THIRTIETH DAY OF APRIL, 1812;

BEING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST INAUGURATION

OF

PRESIDENT WASHINGTON.

By WILLIAM SULLIVAN.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY JOHN ELIOT, JUN.

1812.

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AT a meeting of the STANDING COMMITTEE of the WASHINGTON BENEVOLENT SOCIETY, on Thursday evening, April 30, 1812.

Voted, That the thanks of this Committee, in the name of the Society, be presented to WILLIAM SULLIVAN, Esq. for his able and eloquent address this day delivered before the Society, and to request a copy thereof for publication; and that JOHN WELLES, SAMUEL LIVERMORE, and FRANCIS J. OLIVER, Esqrs. be a Committee to wait on MR. SULLIVAN for this purpose.

A true copy,

Attest, LEMUEL SHAW, *Secretary.*

GENTLEMEN,

PLEASE to accept my respectful acknowledgements for the act of the STANDING COMMITTEE of our Society. The copy which you do me the honor to request, is submitted to your disposal.

WILLIAM SULLIVAN.

Hon. JOHN WELLES, Esq.
SAMUEL LIVERMORE, Esq.
FRANCIS J. OLIVER, Esq.

ORATION.

IF the principles upon which WASHINGTON practised as a *man*, and as a *ruler*, have been forgotten or supplanted, all men who feel attached to the country which he saved, and to the institutions which he supported, will approve of every honorable effort to bring those principles again into action.

A disposition to inquire into the character and conduct of WASHINGTON, and to appreciate his services and virtues, has been generally awakened. The design of erecting monuments to his memory, too long delayed, has been revived with zeal. This design is worthy of his countrymen. But it will be in vain that we fashion bronze and marble to preserve his figure for posterity, if we fail to prove by our lives and conduct, that we have raised more durable monuments in our hearts.

If we fail to cherish and transmit the feelings which his acts inspire, the works which we raise in honor and gratitude, will change to monuments of reproach to our descendants, and to the memory of their fathers.

Nations, like the individuals who compose them, move, in the current of time, subject to changes imperceptible by themselves. They must refer to prin-

ciples to judge of the correctness of their course. As the mariner, who is borne by winds and currents on the surface of the deep, looks to the sun in its altitude to learn what his course has been, and what it should be, so should our nation look to the administration of WASHINGTON ; so should individuals look to the virtues which irradiated his fame, from manhood to the tomb.

Happy is it, that whatever difference may have arisen among us as members of political society, there is one subject in which we all agree, that of paying honor to the memory of this NATIONAL BENEFACTOR. We are come, then, to commune together on WASHINGTON. We are not come to cherish party animosities, or to touch the sensibility of pride of opinion; yet to be faithful to ourselves, to our country, and to posterity. We invoke the sainted spirit of WASHINGTON to witness, that his principles and his practice are now avowed in the sight of heaven, and of the world.

We remember him with the emotions, which follow the poignancy of grief in the most painful bereavements. We derive a melancholy consolation from the fact, that he has existed, and was our own. His fame is now confided to the custody of his countrymen; it is for us to blend with this fame, our gratitude and interest.

In these days of adversity and dismay, we recur to "*the age of* WASHINGTON," as we remember, most vividly, the morning splendor of the opening year, "while Winter loads the earth with snows;" as the mariner is stung the sharpest, with the "thoughts of home," while he struggles with the threatening tempest. If the splendor of the opening year is to revisit our political hemisphere; if our struggle with the tempest shall avail; it must, and it will be, because we have the

manliness to inquire, how and what we have been, what we are, and thence to determine what we will be.

If inspiration should ever be hoped for, it would be on such an occasion as this, that every citizen might see his way of returning to the policy of WASHINGTON; that every man might be penetrated with the truth, that he will be happy, in proportion to his approach to the high standard of WASHINGTON's worth.

It well becomes *us* to be thus employed. It was in this vicinity that he renewed his military life. The possession of this metropolis was his first conquest from the enemy. When, long afterwards, he came in the character of CHIEF of our *nation*, knowing us, it is hoped, far better than some *statesmen* who have survived him, he said to us, "I rejoice with you my fellow citizens, in every circumstance that declares your prosperity, and I do so most cordially, because you have well deserved to be happy. Your love of liberty—your respect for the laws—your habits of industry—and your practice of the moral and religious obligations, are the strongest claims to national and individual happiness; and they will, I trust, be lastingly and firmly established."

If from the abode which his virtues have acquired to him he can behold the concerns of men; if the hearts of this assembly are open to him, he *sees*, that we have continued to deserve his praise and benedictions.

It is necessary to have reviewed minutely the history of the times, which preceded and followed the *declaration of independence*, truly to appreciate the character of WASHINGTON. The imbecility of the powers of Congress; the novelty of their situation; the shock which the provincial governments had received in separating from the mother country; the destitution of men, money, and military stores; the division in opinion among the people; rendered the duties of WASHINGTON inexpressibly arduous.

These circumstances did not discourage him, but served to call forth the vigor of his mind; and to satisfy the public, that every thing which human ability could effect, might be expected from him.

The warfare which he conducted, cannot be compared with the difficulties which embarrassed, nor with the victories which have given celebrity to the accomplished and powerful generals of other countries. The occasion was as singular as the talents which were given him to conduct it. More splendid victories have been achieved; but seven eventful years, in which no error of judgment, no mistake in the selection of agents can be found; during which every quality that varied and trying scenes could need, was promptly in use, will never again be recorded in the history of men.

There is one event which future historians, who will know so little of WASHINGTON as to compare him with other men, will examine with wonder. When peace and the object of the war had been obtained; when the officers, and the army, had seen the end of their labors, but no prospect of reward, and were smarting under what they conceived to be the ingratitude of their country; when the near approach of poverty opened the way for desperation; when WASHINGTON's will was the law; when murmurs were current, and swelling to a torrent on which he could easily have passed to a throne, he not only showed how abhorrent a perversion of his power would have been to his own feelings, but repressed the more than half-formed projects of his army. He conciliated, and encouraged, and induced his unpaid, suffering legions, to seek their cheerless homes. He then resigned his exalted power to those who gave it, and reduced himself to a level, in political rights, with the humblest soldier of his ranks. Let the great men of the world enter the lists with WASHINGTON in

this single event of his life. If they shrink from his presence, let them follow him at humble distance, and mark his future progress in usefulness and glory. Let them contemplate the reward of his virtue in the grateful hearts of his countrymen, and HIM in that abode, where such virtue is had in everlasting remembrance.

Twenty three years have this day elapsed since it was the enviable fortune of *Americans* to see WASHINGTON at the head of their nation, under a system formed by wisdom, reviewed by keen-eyed patriotism, and received by a people, who knew and could value the blessings of rational freedom.

Should the records of the age of WASHINGTON be preserved, and descend to distant times, his valedictory scene with his officers at the close of the war; the offerings of gratitude which made his path way from Mount Vernon to New York when he assumed the duties of President, will be regarded as such fictions as are mingled with the origin of all nations. It will seem to be fiction, because the history of men will have contained nothing like this.

He had come to the chair of state, on the wings of grateful acclamation, not to continue a well organized and successful establishment, but to become the soul of a new creation; to answer the hopes of a people who hoped every thing; to satisfy some who doubted every thing; to bear the suggestions of jealousy; to encounter the malice of the disappointed; to undeceive the honestly disapproving; to meet the fond expectations of his brethren in arms, who looked to his beneficent hand for the reward of their patriotism and valor. He had come where there was no precedent to guide, and where every thing depended, not on power, but on public opinion.

The union of the independent states of America was founded in COMMERCE. It will be seen, that the virtues and services of WASHINGTON, are no where

more interesting or valuable to us, than in our commercial relations.

His active and prophetic mind had considered the immense resources of this continent, and its singular capacities to produce, or attract, whatever is precious in human society. He had long entertained a hope, that a regular and stable government, would evolve the destinies of this favored land.

The constitution of the United States was also founded in COMMERCE. The power of making "war—"peace—treaties—and levying money—with the cor-"respondent executive and judicial authorities," were in practice, by WASHINGTON and ADAMS, applied to regulating commerce, to preparation for its defence, or exertion to obtain redress for the wrongs it had suffered.

The first fruits of the exercise of its powers was to awaken universal industry. The value of property which had been so long depressed, was immediately raised; public and private credit revived. The resources of the northern states for SHIP-BUILDING were soon apparent. The treasures of the ocean were brought to land; and, while the labors of the *fisherman* enriched himself and his country, he acquired the skill which enabled him to convey, in the ships drawn from our own forests, the valuable productions of the southern states. The cultivators of the soil found an increasing demand on the sea-shore, for whatever they could spare of the fruits of their labours; they, and our other citizens, found there also whatever they desired of the products of all other climes. They found there the means of knowing all that their fellow man had done, or suffered, or enjoyed, upon the varied earth.

The changes wrought by commerce are not within the power of description. They may be examined singly; but, like the virtues of WASHINGTON, they cannot, at once, be viewed by the human mind.

It was by commerce that you were employed, fed and enriched at home, while your enterprizing countrymen carried your new name and your flag, and respect for your nation, throughout the habitable globe. Your numbers rapidly increased, your towns, your interior country, assumed a new appearance; your knowledge and science advanced; your hearts were made liberal; you enjoyed the means of education for your children; the path to honor was equally open to all; your homes were the abode of comfort; you went forth rejoicing; you felt that WASHINGTON was your guardian and protector. It is COMMERCE that has adorned your country with so many *temples* for the worship of the ALMIGHTY, and blessed you with the labors and services of the able and the eloquent, who speak to you in fervent, heartfelt language, to promote the objects for which government is alone valuable, and for which only, life should be desired.

Commerce rewarded you for the favors she had received. She poured into your treasury the abundant means of defraying every expence of government. She gave you the means also of ample protection for herself, on the high way of nations. It was the opinion of WASHINGTON often repeated, in his private and public transactions, that COMMERCE could not exist without *protection*. That the only protection she could have, was a sufficient force on that element where, until the *withering* power of *Napoleon* was felt, she waved the flags of all the *christian* states and empires of the world.

Such also was the opinion of Mr. Madison. His words in debate in Congress on the motion to establish the tonnage duty were—"*I consider an acquisition of "maritime strength essential to this country. Should "we ever be so unfortunate as to be engaged in war, "what but this can defend our towns and cities upon the*

"*sea coast? or what but this can enable us to repel an* "*invading enemy?*"

The impulse which WASHINGTON had given, continued through the administration of his successor. In his time our commercial interests were attended to in the spirit which produced the national compact. We saw the foundation of an American Navy. The valor and resources of our country were displayed against France on the ocean; and the name of Americans and heroism echoed from the coasts of Africa to Europe.

"Such was the age of WASHINGTON." It has passed. You contemplate what has been; and, as with those who walk among the tombs, reflections cannot be suppressed. If human society was intended by its DIVINE CREATOR to enable us to fortify ourselves by union against the fraud and force incident to our existence; to reproduce the delights of life, and assuage its sorrows by sympathy; to fire invention by comparison of powers, and advance our well being by improvement of talents; if from this condition come enlightened views, benevolent affections, social and domestic endearments; if the grateful heart, attracted to piety, lifts the chastened mind through *revelation* to the GREAT AUTHOR of human blessings; if it is felt that *rational liberty* is the bond of these blessings, and that they only deserve who will defend them; if in these are comprised all that heaven can give to earth, such blessings we had throughout the age of WASHINGTON.

Here our theme of gratulation ends. The seeds of change were sown long before WASHINGTON had retired to the shades of Mount Vernon. As the warmth of the sun invigorates the serpent, while it clothes the earth with fertility, there came up men, who could not endure the serene felicity of our nation, nor the splendor of its AUTHOR'S fame.

By the accession of Mr. *Jefferson* to the Presidency, the fortunes of our nation experienced a deep and deplorable change. Whatever President WASHINGTON was accustomed to do, *President Jefferson* sought to avoid. He approached as though he held the destinies of America in his hand, and had taken "a bond of fate" that unvarying happine s should be at his disposal. It was soon found that, through the whole extent of executive patronage, unconditional submission to the will of Mr. *Jefferson* was the only security, the only acceptable pretension, *for office*. This feature of his administration, *too faithfully copied in* MASSACHUSETTS, is indescribably odious. It excludes from the service of the Republic nearly half its members, however useful and necessary their talents may be. It makes a government of men and not of laws; for it invites apostacy; and attracts around the throne, the ambitious, the needy, the unprincipled. It is the venomous aliment of party. Such exercise of power claims close kindred with despotism; *republicanism* can have to it no relation, but that of inexpressible abhorrence.

The NAVY, which was the remaining hope, and the pride of America, and which was in part the patriotic offering of that zeal, which dictated the Union, was *hastened* into decay, while immense sums were expended in a mode of naval armament, which showed the difference between experiment and experience, and was useful only as facilities to disaster, and sepulchres for the brave, untimely lost.

If Mr. *Jefferson* had submitted to the Senate, as it was his duty to do, the favorable treaty which his own ministers had made with *England*, and not returned it, contrary to the courtesies which are due and practised among nations not at war, our difficulties with *England* would have been adjusted, as they were in the

time of WASHINGTON, and our country shielded from the afflictive evils which it has since endured.

When the war in Europe was renewed, we found no proclamation of neutrality ; no measures taken to defend our rights upon the ocean. We became the despicable convenience of the *Belligerents* ; and subject like all who have no means of defence, to insult and to rapine. Even the worm turns against his oppressor ; and like the worm we attempted vengeance. Was it by fleets ?—Was it by calling into action the resources of patriotism, and the strength of our nation ? No. It was by a measure, which history will blush to record ; a measure which stands alone in the policy of nations,and which can be resembled only to that monstrous fable of mythology, which represents the *father* of the *gods* devouring his own *offspring*.

How would the soul of WASHINGTON have been affected if he had been permitted to revisit the earth, while this desolating evil was wasting the strength and the honor, which he had laboured to establish !

A PEOPLE, who had united for the express purpose of asserting their right to the high way of nations ; who had waged a just, an awful, and successful war with their *parent country ;* who had twice treated with that country, and assured its own rights ; a PEOPLE who had opposed its strength to that of the "*great nation*," and refused its insolent demand of tribute, and had resorted to the last appeal, and produced at once the object of all legitimate war—*honorable peace ;* a PEOPLE whose little fleet had spread terror among the nations of the coast of Barbary ; it was such a PEOPLE that saw a wall of adamant raised in an instant, between them and the *ocean !* The implements of industry fell from their hands ; the wealth of their enterprize and labor perished before them ; property sunk

by millions; the very purposes of society perverted; the name of an American made odious.

When sometimes this wall was scaled to prevent famishing, or to indulge a spirit of enterprize, which deserved a happier fate, *justice* was called on to use her *sword*, but not her *balance*, between the government and its suffering citizens.

The sentiments of disgust which this measure produced towards the government, shocked, perhaps fatally, that confidence, which WASHINGTON sought to inspire. It more fatally shook the principles of morality, on which government is founded, by destroying the means of industry, and abandoning a whole people to idleness, or forcing them to devices and hazards to elude rapacious power, by perverting the course of national relationship in peace and war, that course which GOD has ordained, and which his creatures cannot change.

This monster at length removed terrified by universal clamor, but "casting a longing, lingering look "behind." Its progeny are too hateful to be numbered, or examined; those only must be called up which sadden the present hour.

While the ships of the United States have been allowed to carry to England whatever their owners thought fit, it has seemed to our rulers a proper policy to forbid the importation of many millions of property, owned and paid for, by our own citizens in ports of the British empire when unwarned of, and unsuspecting the interdiction of commerce. The duties on this property would exceed in amount the monstrous loan which the United States are now attempting to obtain.

England forbids us to go to or from France, or her dependencies, and seizes our property if we do; yet convoys and protects our commerce wherever it is found in other destinations. By the wanton and cruel exercise of power by some of the commanders of her

ships of war, some of our countrymen have been impressed, some have been taken by mistake, from similarity of appearance and sameness of language, and hundreds of men have been taken, who are not our countrymen, and who, by the law of nations, practise frauds upon us, and the belligerents, in pretending to be such.

France forbids us to go to or from any English, Portuguese, or Spanish port, and seizes, sinks, or BURNS all ships which she finds so employed. She forces our seamen into her privateers to escape the cruelties of her prisons. She pours into her treasury millions of our hard earnings, as an act retaliating for the laws of our own government. She expends these treasures to increase the pomp of her festivals, or pursue her relentless war to extirpate liberty and commerce. Meanwhile our own government declares, and repeats, that her decrees violating our neutral rights are repealed. In this state of the world our national councils were convened before the expected time, and every eye was directed to them, with anxious expectation.

The hope, that commerce was to resume its wonted channels ; that our differences with European powers had yielded to the conciliation, which the times demand ; that our resources were to be retrieved ; our property brought home, and our nation restored to its once exalted station, was overwhelmed by the sound of war, issued from the *palace*, and caught and echoed through the walls of the *Capitol.* In five long, anxious months, taxes, and loans, and appointments, announced *a war* of *conquest* against a neighbouring province, inhabited principally by a people, who hardly know or care to what government they belong, and who have no more agency or interest in the causes of war, than the native Indians who dwell beyond their borders. At length the sure precursor of war, it is said, has come in the too well known form of embar-

go ; a war for the *honor* of the United States. This, at a moment when our treasury is exhausted—our credit worse than doubtful—without a Navy—without defence where alone we are vulnerable—our ships scattered over the ocean—more commercial capital at the mercy of the intended enemy than remains at home—the wrongs and atrocities of France overlooked, or excused—our citizens beseeching its government not to take measures by which *they only can suffer*, and by which they must be ruined ; in this unexampled scene, some believe a war inevitable—some fear it—a great proportion think it impossible—none but French hirelings wish it. The whole is awfully confused, and confounding ; effects without causes ; ends without means ; all is mystery, sophistry, delusion, madness !

Americans ! rouse from this dreadful lethargy of the soul ; break the ties which hold your reason captive ; the spirit of WASHINGTON beckons you upward above the mists and jealousies of party, and invites you to behold the nations of the earth in the soberness of truth.

Think not of French, or of English, or of the party names which disgrace and palsy you ; but look on the face of the earth as it is.

You see in one part of continental Europe, the country of a people borne down by oppression, corrupted by the licentious and the atheistical, suddenly overturning the foundations of empire, and the distinctions which ages had cemented. You see them renouncing the SUPREME BEING ; declaring *death an eternal sleep ;* invoking *liberty* and *reason* as their *deities ;* in their names breaking the bonds of civil society ; annihilating virtue and morality, and even the native sense of right and wrong ; shedding torrents of the blood of their citizens in the mockery of trials, and in wanton massacre. These monstrous deeds engender an *individual*, who seizes on the ruins as his prey, and

mounts over them, to that un-imagined height, which history, nature, reason, and all but faith in the providence of GOD, behold with fearful and unsteady gaze. A force, physical and intellectual, which bends all things to its pleasure, having no limit to its will, but power; no limit to power, but that which is impossible to man. You see it move with unceasing step towards the subjugation of the world. The voice of nature sounds not to its ear; the pulse of pity moves not in its heart; conscience, remorse, never withhold its arm. It tears from the agonized bosom of parents their tender offspring to slaughter, and be slaughtered; no submission can appease, no devotion conciliate. The fate of its *ally* is more dreadful than that of its conquered foe. Beneath its iron sceptre there are those who are kind and brave, and generous and wise; but when such a power reigns, all must submit, as the forest bends to the storm that pours over it, or is prostrate never to rise.

In another portion of Europe you behold two nations, lately allies of this power, and for whom these nations expended their blood and their treasure, now struggling for existence against this terrific foe. Humanity turns pale at the recital of the cruelties of these invaders. "*A fire devoureth before them, and behind* "*them a flame burneth; the land is as the garden of* "*Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilder-* "*ness.*" In another part, a nation, whose capital has once been the trophy of the conqueror, and which yielded a bride to his arms, awaits its doom, which must be submission, or an expiring struggle. In the north of Europe you see the only remaining empire of the continent, probably now engaged in hardly doubtful conflict, against the destroyer of nations. Such is continental Europe; where the sounds of commerce, industry, peace, religion, learning, virtue, dwelt. The presence, or the echo, of rapacious war, has

hushed them all. The dismal silence of armed despotism is interrupted only by acts of daily suffering. That communion so dear to the heart is gone forever. No man dares whisper his sorrows even to a brother, lest he should speak to one who is commissioned to betray.

On the islands, which border on the western side of Europe is found all that remains of European liberty; all the liberty that can be enjoyed in a government of kingly power, and hereditary distinctions. The employments, and the comforts of social life, which are no longer found upon the continent, still exist in them. Industry, learning, manufactures, commerce, have given this people power by which they are become the masters of the ocean. From these islands, immense armies go forth against the French, in aid of the inhabitants of the peninsula.

The great body of the people of England are industrious, virtuous, and religious. Its commercial men are the foundation of its strength and power. It is in this land, that the religion which is the friend of commerce, and the basis of the laws of nations, numbers its most learned and eloquent supporters. Here SHAKESPEARE rent the veil which concealed the human heart; —here nature opened to her favoured NEWTON, the volume of her laws;—here LOCKE discussed the principles of liberty;—here he disclosed to the human mind the secrets of its own being;---here POPE and MILTON charmed the listening world.

From these islands our fathers brought to the land which we inhabit, the language which we speak, our principles of justice, liberty, and religious freedom.

This mighty people France attempts to overwhelm by every human effort. With England the object is not conquest; but the serious question whether she can continue to resist the destroyer of the liberties and rights of mankind. In her tremendous warfare, she ought so to conduct, as to attract the sympathies and good wishes of all, who are friends to the freedom and

independence of nations. But proud, haughty, confident in her strength, she tramples, like France, upon neutral rights. She would find, that the sons of WASHINGTON, whenever their own government abandoned its gross partiality, and unjust discrimination between her and France, would cordially unite in seeking that redress for wrongs, which their undeviating attachment to their beloved country, so imperiously demands.

If England falls, there will remain no obstacle but America to the universal dominion of France ; and when America is left alone to contend with this power, fraud and force may chain her liberty and independence to the conqueror's car. If such is to be our destiny, happy will be the fate of him, who falls in the contest for his country's freedom ;---happy ! that he lives not to witness the agonies of those who called him husband, father.

Return then to our own country, and survey it aloof from party feeling. We rejoice that the ocean rolls between us, and the scenes we have contemplated. We feel that it is not for us to plunge into the endless war of Europe ; to us a war without object, and without hope. We see that while such conflicts have heretofore existed, we have preserved our rights by negotiation, *and by being prepared for war.* It is not the interest, and therefore not the wish of England, to make war with us. To France our friendship and our enmity are equally unavailing ; her enmity is equally unavailing to us, *while England is unsubdued.* If she can league us in her plans for the destruction of England, she will have aided her own grand object, she will have diminished our strength, and will have made us an easier prey, when our turn shall come to be numbered among her conquered and wretched vassals.

Unmindful of the blessings which distinguish us from all people who exist, or who have ever existed,

we wrap ourselves in dangers, as with a garment, and start not at the sounds, which may be *the forging of our chains.* We start not at the dreadful fact, that *with British hostility, and French friendship, we may, perhaps, cease to be a free people, or cease to exist.*

The collisions and the misunderstandings between this country and England, would not, according to the policy of WASHINGTON, especially in the present calamitous state of the world, have been considered causes of war. Our nation is not satisfied, nor will it be easily satisfied, that the evils of war might not be averted by *fair negotiation.* How is it that we are ever *profoundly ignorant of our relations with France,* while every thing, and any thing, which can excite an emotion against England, *is the subject of an executive message?* Without stopping to inquire as to who was the *first agressor, the wrongs, injuries, and insults of France, exceed those of England, an hundredfold. The most insulting injury of all, is the pretended repeal of the decrees, which is the present pretext for the outcry of war.*

If the war must come, France must be our ally. *History* will record but once throughout the lapse of all her ages, that the only *remaining republic,* far removed from scenes of war, joined with that DESPOT, who had struck from being, nations, empires, republics, and the rights of man, and helped him to crush the last hope of European commerce and liberty.

Was government made for the men who are in office, or for the people by whose suffrage they have power? If for the people, can it be that such war is intended? Have those who would make it, ever reflected whether the people for whom, and in whose right they act, will endure such war? There is a prudence of which *elected* patriots, as well as patriotism, will take counsel. Let us rather suppose, that the cry of war is raised, to reconcile us to the loss of commerce. To fasten upon us the *continental system* of NAPOLEON. When the use of OUR ocean is taken

from us, when we are pressed down to poverty and insignificance, we may be tauntingly consoled by the assurance, that we have escaped a war!

It is neither manly or profitable to condemn the course of national, or individual conduct, without showing that a better conduct might have been pursued. We look to the counsels of WASHINGTON. From these we know, that if he could be recalled to power he would instantly brush from the nation these disgraceful commercial restrictions. He would assemble around him the enlightened and the patriotic, however distinguished by political opinion. He would recall the fleeting shade of COMMERCE. He would repair the nation's means of defence on the shore, and on the deep. He would dispel the jealousies and delusions which have been so industriously scattered among his countrymen. When he had repaired the waste of years in the national resources, morality, and spirit, he would seek, with the *olive branch* in one hand, and the *sword* in the other, that his country should be restored, *by treaty*, to its former elevation. If these efforts failed, you would see that the war he waged would not be without object; would not be without success; would not be without honor and glory to his beloved country.

You cannot recall WASHINGTON; but his counsels remain with you. You can practise his precepts; you can use your constant and honorable exertions, that his counsels shall again take possession of the hearts of your countrymen; that your affairs shall be administered by such men as *he* called his friends; not such as shunned his penetrating eye, and never used his name with commendation, while he was a ministering angel to this people.

STRONG was among the friends, who were dear to WASHINGTON. Welcome him again to your confidence. Silencing his fondest inclinations, like WASHINGTON, he comes forth from retirement, whenever his country demands his services.

Gentlemen of this Society,

The regret which you entertain for the absence of one of your officers,* is feelingly reciprocated by him. He is soothed with the consciousness of being engaged in the performance of his duty. You are consoled by the fact, that his duty is performed with that constancy, firmness, and ability, which makes his fellowship an honor among those who claim political kindred with WASHINGTON.—You have solemnly pledged yourselves to each other, and to the world, that you will follow the *political tenets* of the FATHER OF YOUR COUNTRY. He has conjured you to maintain inviolate the CONSTITUTION and the UNION of these states; *upon these he founds your hopes of happiness.* But you are ever to remember, that the principle upon which the union of the states is founded, is COMMERCE; without which you "cannot, and do not wish to exist." Inseparably connected with COMMERCE, is an efficient *naval protection.* This is guaranteed to you by the terms, and the spirit of your national contract. WASHINGTON warns you of the dangers of *usurpation.* He inculcates the necessity of guarding and of exercising your political rights according to the dictates of conscience.

Knowledge and virtue are the pillars of the republic. Your purpose is to disseminate truth among yourselves; and by communing together, to obtain that information, that practice of moral and political duty, which *will save your republic for your grateful descendants.*

Fear not that your fellow citizens are chargeable with a wish to dismember the union, and form alliance with foreign powers. If you had no pledge but that of interest, you would have enough to repel the selfish and wicked calumnies, with which the air is freighted! When you add to this the feelings of honor, of patriotism, of attachment to their families; their constant devotion to the common welfare, assured by years of public labors, you will not the sooner listen to these

* The Hon. JOSIAH QUINCY, one of the Vice Presidents.

calumnies, because *the dignity of high office has been abused to give them force.*

But you may, and you ought, to fear those men who exult in the deeds of revolutionary France, and equally in the victories of despotic France, whether gained in equal and just war, or won from the gallant Portuguese and Spaniard, who resist on their own soil for liberty, for life, for their wives, their children, for the sepulchres of their fathers.

You may, and you ought, to fear that temper, which labors, without ceasing, to cast the odium of *foreign influence* on your worthiest fellow citizens, who strive to save you from *war*, from the destruction of *commerce*, and from the *rapine* of those, who seem to think, that *government and the people were made for them.*

You are pledged to remember and to imitate the virtues of WASHINGTON.

His *industry* was such that time never came and found him unprepared. He was *benevolent ;* his life was a continued act of beneficence. He was *prudent ;* for he had never to undo or recall his acts or words. He was *brave ;* for he never engaged in conflict which his reason and conscience did not approve. He was *just ;* for he held it the highest honor of his life to be deemed an honest man. He was a *christian.* Throughout his life he humbly reposed himself on the providence of his CREATOR, and was supported, in all his efforts, by his hopes in his REDEEMER. Among his last words was the exulting expression, "*I am not afraid to die.*"

Young Members of this Society : You will indulge the suggestions of affectionate wishes for your usefulness, and welfare. With honest hearts, and generous feelings, rising to the scenes of active life, it is for you to study, and to cherish the character of WASHINGTON. You are not yet the victims of prejudice, nor bound in the shackles of party. It is the country in which you have drawn your first breath, which claims your zealous attachment to its republican institutions ;

and your veneration for those things, which age and wisdom have approved. Live, as you believe WASHINGTON would approve. In a few rapid years you will become heads of families. Be, what you would wish your sons to be. The burthen of supporting your country is devolving on you. You will not be faithless to yourselves, nor disappoint the fond hopes which centre in you.

MOTHERS, who honour us with your presence;.... you have a precious interest in this day's solemnities. WASHINGTON *was emphatically your friend.* He owed to his MOTHER his education; perhaps to her the principles of action, which made him *useful* and *illustrious.* To HIM you are indebted, that the aspect of your homes has been so welcome, and so cheering. It was HE who gave your husbands, and your sons, the glorious example of being valuable to their nation,.... and taught them to be so worthily dear to you.

You have a near and important relation to this SOCIETY. It is for you to stamp the unfolding minds of your offspring, with impressions of virtue, of honor, of piety. It is for you to found the fabric of their worth, and enjoy, in their felicity, an invaluable reward for all your solicitudes.

Friends of WASHINGTON!---We cannot sufficiently value that principle of our national and state constitutions, by which the people periodically determine by whom they will be ruled. Power, in most other countries, is gained, lost, or transferred by violence, tumult and crime. We are blessed with an easy and certain remedy for the abuse of power, *in the exercise of the right of suffrage.*

It cannot be imagined, that our fellow citizens have other views in the selection of the objects of their confidence, than the preservation of our constitutions, and of the precious rights of civil liberty.

But this selection, to effect their object, must be governed by principle, and must be made with intelligence.

The principle to which all must refer, is WASHINGTON's life and practice ;---intelligence may be derived in associations formed for the purpose of faithful and honest inquiry ; and of fair comparison between WASHINGTON and other statesmen.

All that conforms to WASHINGTON's standard of truth must be right, and all that this standard rejects, must be wrong.

The veneration which is this day manifested for his services, and virtues, forbids us to despair of our beloved country.---Doubt not that your example will be followed. The spirit of sober inquiry is gone forth. THERE IS A REDEEMING POWER IN THE GOOD SENSE OF THE PEOPLE, by which our REPUBLIC will be preserved and enjoyed, according to the hopes and the prophesy of WASHINGTON.

NOTES.

IMPRESSED SEAMEN.

THE impressment of our seamen, is a subject, which does, and ought to excite, the *highest indignation*. Nothing can touch the sensibility of an American more keenly, than that his *fellow citizen* should be held in captivity, on board a war-ship of a foreign power, when his own nation is not at war.

But the extent of this evil has been greatly exaggerated, *for mere party purposes*, by men who in fact care nothing for the seamen, or ships, of the northern states.

There are three classes of men, who are called "impressed seamen." First, those who have obtained fraudulent protections, and who are neither native, or naturalized citizens. Secondly--naturalized citizens. Thirdly--native Americans.

The people of the United States will not go to war for the *first* class. They will not go to war for the *second* class. They did not ask, nor wish, these *foreigners* to come here, and be naturalized. Notwithstanding their naturalization, the respective governments, within whose allegiance these men were born, have a legal right to their services, in time of war ;—as the United States, would have to the services of their native citizens, notwithstanding an oath of allegiance to a foreign power.

The number of impressed, native Americans is few. How many men in this State, or in the United States, can name an American citizen, who is known, or supposed, to be held in captivity on board a British ship of war ?—Of these few, how many have, with them, that evidence of American citizenship, which has always been respected by every Government in Europe, except that of France ?

THE POWER OF FRANCE.

The magnitude of French power, and its terrific character, seem to be little understood, or if understood, too little regarded in America.

At the commencement of the French revolution, the population subject to French power, was about *twenty-eight millions*. In addition to this number, *France* has now, subjected to her control, *seventy-five millions of people*, who composed within the last *twenty years*, nearly two hundred empires, states, republics, and sovereignties !

With such a power, what man who is not French in his *heart*, or in his *fortunes*, can endure alliance !

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